

WEST SWINDON PARISH COUNCIL

Planning & Environment Committee

Woodland Trust Report

1. Introduction:

- 1.1 The importance of Climate change has gathered momentum over the last year. An important contribution is in the growth of UK-wide patchwork of trees and woods – not just by planting, but also through natural regeneration. The woods, hedges and green spaces create buffers to existing habitats, tackle climate change and reverse wildlife decline – all at the same time. Hedges are a really important habitat. Many native trees work well as hedge plants – hazel, hawthorn, beech, hornbeam, blackthorn, and field maple.
- 1.2 To limit the worst effects, the Woodland Trust is promoting tree planting as part of **The Big Climate Fightback** This campaign encourages everyone to recognise the importance of trees and woodlands. The Trust is promoting events during National Tree Week – 30 November 2019.

2. Options:

- 2.1. The Parish Council can promote The Big Climate Fightback campaign and encourage local people to plant in the gardens.
- 2.2. The Parish Council can also review its open spaces and add new plants in trees and hedgerows where possible and appropriate.
- 2.3. The Woodland Trust offer free trees at various times of the year. Free trees for schools and community groups for this November have been allocated, but eligible groups can apply online for trees in March 2020.
- 2.4 The Woodland Trust runs [MOREwoods](#) a subsidised scheme available for those who want to plant over 500 trees. They can provide a subsidy of up to 75% for planting trees if eligible. This would begin the process to plant a larger area of woodland in 2020

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are potential financial implications if the Parish Council was minded to purchase new trees to support the Big Climate Fightback. There is a budget of £2,000 for trees and tree maintenance which would be available for this. If local

volunteer groups wish to participate, they could use their volunteer clean and green fund resources to assist.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 The Committee note the report and consider approval of one or more options set out in the report.

Paula Harrison
Parish Manager